

# Environmental Health

# Central District Health Department

## The Food Review

Back Issues of this publication are available on our website: [cdhd.idaho.gov](http://cdhd.idaho.gov)

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### New Basic Food Safety Video Available Online



The Central District Health Department is making the first-of-its kind Basic Food Safety instructional video available online at the health district website: [www.cdhd.idaho.gov](http://www.cdhd.idaho.gov). For years the health district has offered a two-hour introductory class based on the Idaho Food Code. The video will replace the two-hour class and open up learning opportunities to a much wider audience through a specially designed website that will allow food establishment owners to

download the video and use it in training their employees.

“Our job in public health is to protect the communities we serve,” said Russ Duke, Director of the Central District Health Department. “By making the principles of food safety available to everyone, we hope to reduce the incidence of foodborne illness, whether in a restaurant or home kitchen.”

Foodborne illness in the United States is thought to be responsible for approximately 76 million illnesses, 235,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths each year. By some estimates the cost of these illnesses could be as high as \$83 billion annually. No restaurant wants to have to deal with the loss of business, lawsuits and increased insurance premiums that often follow a foodborne illness outbreak. The best protection is the proper training of all food service employees.

“My business depends on having well trained employees,” said David Knickrehm, Executive Chef at the Blue Ribbon Artisans in Meridian, whose kitchen is featured in the video. “My customers expect their food to be fresh and properly prepared in a clean kitchen. I can’t imagine offering them anything less.”

“Our team of environmental health specialists is out every day inspecting food establishments and educating food service managers,” said Tom Schmalz, Environmental Health Program Manager for Food Safety. “The problems they see are usually pretty easy to fix, but could be avoided with a little more attention to the basics. This video will provide managers and their employees easy access to review the basic principles of food safety.”

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Food Review is sent quarterly, free of charge to all licensed food establishments in our health district. We hope to include news of interest and importance. Topic ideas or articles written by the readers are welcome to be sent to: Editor, Food Review, CDHD, 707 N. Armstrong Pl., Boise, ID 83704. Extra copies of the newsletter are available at your local Health Department office.

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The Basic Food Safety video is divided into six sections, each 5 – 6 minutes in length, with the final section being a review of the previous five. This was done to make downloading the video easier. The video is available in a variety of formats from the website and can be downloaded directly onto a computer's hard drive or onto an iPod or similar device.

The Central District Health Department still offers the 4-hour **Idaho Food Safety and Sanitation** course and the 8-hour **ServSafe®** food safety course. Both courses provide students with a certificate upon completion. For more information visit the CDHD website at [www.cdhd.idaho.gov](http://www.cdhd.idaho.gov) or call 327-7499.

## Food Safety Certification Courses



The Central District Health Department offers two certification level classes in food safety.

The **Idaho Food Safety and Sanitation** course is a 4-hour classroom-based course. Completing this course provides an Idaho certification in food safety under the state's Food Protection Program. The certification is good for five years. The cost of the course is \$30.

The **Idaho Food Safety and Sanitation** course will be offered at the Ada County Central District Health office, 707 N Armstrong Place, Boise on the following dates:

Wednesday, August 15, 2007	1:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 12, 2007	1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

The **ServSafe®** food safety course is an 8-hour classroom-based course sanctioned by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation and designed to provide food service managers with the knowledge necessary to meet state and national standards. The certification is valid for five years and can be used anywhere in the United States. The course costs \$95.00 and includes lunch.

The **ServSafe®** food safety course will be offered at the Ada County Central District Health office, 707 N Armstrong Place, Boise on the following dates:

Tuesday, July 31, 2007	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 29, 2007	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 19, 2007	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

For more information and to register for either of these courses please call 327-7499.

The **Idaho Food Safety and Sanitation** course and the **ServSafe®** food safety course can be offered off-site for groups of ten students or more. Call 327-7499 for more information.

# Food Defense & Terrorism

From FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition  
[www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/alert.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/alert.html)

The **A L E R T** initiative is intended to raise the awareness of state and local government agency and industry representatives regarding food defense issues and preparedness. It is important to be ALERT to protect your business. Many large retailers, processors and warehouses already practice ALERT.

The **ALERT** acronym:

**A** - Assure yourself that the supplies and ingredients you use are from approved and secure sources.

- Use only known manufacturers and suppliers for ingredients and packaging.
- Ask your suppliers if they practice food defense measures.
- Supervise off-loading of supplies. This is good practice anytime – for temperature, cross-contamination of ready-to-eat products or chemical contamination.

**L** - Look after the security of food in your facility.

- Have a system of receiving and storing foods. How do you handle distressed, damaged, or returned products?
- Track materials received and those in use. Can you find food invoices, if asked?
- Limit access into the facility. Inspect water, electricity and refrigeration areas.

**E** - Employees and people coming into the facility. Do you really know them?

- Conduct background checks on staff (including seasonal, temporary, contract and volunteer staff, whether hired directly or through a recruitment firm) considering their access to sensitive areas and degree of supervision.
- Know who belongs in your facility.
- Establish an identification system for employees.
- Limit access by staff to areas their duties require.
- Prevent customer access to critical areas such as loading docks, kitchen.

**R** - Reports about the food under your control.

- Do you annually review the effectiveness of your security system? Are your computer systems kept confidential?
- You should perform random food defense inspections. Establish and maintain records so you can trace back food ingredients to suppliers or trace forward where food was sent.
- Do you keep a record of complaints? A complaint may be the result of a tampering or terrorist event.

**T** - Threats or suspicious behavior at the facility requires notifying others. Do you know whom?

Hold any food that you believe may have been affected. First contact local law enforcement, then the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the local Health District.

Phone numbers: FDA 301-443-1240 or 425-486-8788

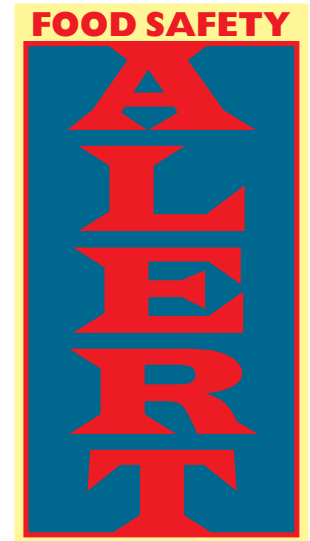
USDA 1-866-395-9701

Idaho State Communication 208-846-7610

Central District Health Department 208-327-7499

As part of this initiative, the FDA asked for agencies to volunteer in a March 2007 exercise designed to test the communication between agencies by simulating a trace back /trace forward recall. FDA selected a product for local agencies to sample and to gather source information of the ingredients.

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Central District Health Department was the only Idaho agency selected from the Idaho volunteers available. The exercise took place over a month and started at the state and local level with a visit to a restaurant known to have the identified product. This product and information about it was sent to an FDA lab for testing. Information about the distributors or manufacturers of the ingredients was sent along with invoices to the FDA exercise coordinating team. The second week some state and local agencies, USDA and FDA district staff inspected school central kitchens. The third and fourth week regulators visited the manufacturers or distributors or warehouses to trace back sources or trace forward other recipients of the product. More samples were also collected for analysis.

The coordination of information was fairly smooth and there were few surprises. Some locating information ended up at the corporate headquarters or a dead end. Laboratory analysis for harmful substances or bacteria did not find anything. The exercise ended with an evaluation and final results.

During the exercise, FDA had the real-life recall of pet foods. The A L E R T initiative can certainly be applied in all establishments along the food supply line.

Posters and information in several languages are available at the website listed at the top of the article.

## **Food Security Prevention Measures Guidance for Retailers**

**Adopted and revised from FDA Guidance for Industry by Deborah Carney, REHS**

This guidance represents the current thinking on appropriate measures that can be taken by food establishments to minimize the risk of food being subject to tampering, criminal or terrorist actions. Operators of food establishments are encouraged to review their current procedures and controls in light of the potential for tampering, criminal or terrorist actions and make appropriate improvements. Implementing enhanced preventive measures requires the commitment of management and employees to be successful. Both should participate in their development and review. Not all of the guidance is appropriate or practical for every food establishment. Operators should review the guidance as it relates to the components of their operation, and assess which preventive measures are suitable.

Management of food defense in an establishment should, at least, consist of security, investigation, supervision and control of products and packages. Food establishment operators may want to consider:

### **Security procedures:**

- make security an assignment for qualified individuals
- encourage all staff to be alert to any signs of tampering with products, equipment, and look for unusual situations or behaviors and alert management about any findings
- pre-hiring screening, check references, verify immigration status, perform background checks
- ensure physical facility is equipped with locks, lights and limited access

### **Investigation:**

- have a plan to respond and report a suspicious activity or threat
- train all employees to prevent, detect and report food security issues
- immediately investigate all information about suspicious activity
- alert local law enforcement about all suspected criminal activity
- alert appropriate food inspection/or health department agencies

### **Supervision:**

- know your employees, who are on duty and when
- limit access to food preparation and storage areas
- provide an appropriate level of supervision to all employees
- conduct daily security checks of the premises for signs of tampering, unusual situations or behaviors
- record security checks and reports of suspicious activity
- establish an ID system for employees and restrict visitors to your site



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### Product and Package Control:

- inspect raw materials and ingredients coming into your establishment
- keep logs of shipment dates, carriers, product condition and temperature
- secure area for chemical, inventory sheets, labeling and limited access
- limit personal items carried in by the employees, have a designated place for the items to be stored
- implement procedures to ensure the security of incoming mail and packages

Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of your food security management system. A systematic review of your plan can be a valuable tool to ensure a safe and healthy product for your customers. In our global food supply, each link in the food chain is important. Food defense and security is everyone's business.

## FDA Releases New Software Tool to Help Keep Food Facilities Safe from Attack Latest Effort in Strengthening U.S. Food Defense

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has released a new tool to help growers, packers, processors, manufacturers, warehouse, transporters, and retailers in the food industry determine the vulnerability of individual food facilities to biological, chemical, or radiological attack.

The software program, called the CARVER + Shock Software Tool, is a science-based prevention strategy to safeguard the food supply. This tool is an example of the type of approach currently being developed as part of a broader food protection strategy currently under development by FDA.

"FDA's goal in developing the CARVER + Shock software is to maximize protection of the American food supply," said FDA Assistant Commissioner for Food Protection David Acheson, M.D. "The relative risk-ranking methodology used by the CARVER + Shock software tool has been designed to assist facility operators in identifying potential vulnerabilities and assist in providing preventive measures to increase the defense of products and operations."

CARVER + Shock was developed by FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, in collaboration with Sandia National Laboratories, the Institute of Food Technologists, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service, National Center for Food Protection and Defense, State representatives, and private industry representatives.

The name of the risk assessment software is derived from the acronym CARVER, which refers to six attributes used to evaluate targets for attack.

- Criticality: What impact would an attack have on public health and the economy?
- Accessibility: How easily can a terrorist access a target?
- Recuperability: How well could a system recover from an attack?
- Vulnerability: How easily could an attack be accomplished?
- Effect: What would be the direct loss from an attack, as measured by loss in production?
- Recognizability: How easily could a terrorist identify a target?

The CARVER tool also evaluates a seventh attribute—the psychological impacts of an attack or "shock" attributes of a target. For example, the psychological impact tends to be greater when a large number of deaths is involved or if the target has historical or cultural significance.

CARVER + Shock is the latest in a series of food defense efforts by FDA following the terrorist attacks of September 2001. Since then, FDA has worked closely with its partners in federal, state and local government, and with the food industry to assess existing food defense measures and augment them for improved protection.

One such effort, the Strategic Partnership Program Agroterrorism Initiative, helps identify sector-specific vulnerabilities, determine research gaps and needs, and increase coordination between the federal government and industry stakeholders.

In 2006, FDA launched the ALERT Initiative, designed to raise industry awareness of food defense and preparedness issues. CARVER + Shock builds on ALERT, and allows a more formal and detailed food defense assessment.

To see a consumer article called CARVER + Shock: Enhancing Food Defense, visit [www.fda.gov/consumer/updates/carvershock061107.html](http://www.fda.gov/consumer/updates/carvershock061107.html)





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## Food Recalls by Bob Jue

A consumer recently asked me if food safety was being ignored in this country. She asked this because of the spate of recalled foods. You may remember recalls from earlier this year for Salmonella in peanut butter and melamine in pet food. Recently toothpaste manufactured in China was implicated for having “antifreeze” as an ingredient. There have also been several more ground beef recalls for E.coli.

I told the woman that actually FDA and USDA are looking at imported foods more closely since melamine was found in pet foods, and the USDA has had a “zero tolerance” for E. coli O157:H7 in ground beef since the outbreak in 1990’s.

### **How does a recall get started? There are a number of ways for a recall to be initiated:**

- The manufacturer’s or processor’s quality assurance process can find something out of tolerance with their standards.
- Customer complaints can start a recall if they are validated by the regulatory agency and the cause of the complaints pose a threat to consumer health.
- The regulatory authority can request a “voluntary” recall if the product is found to be made or stored in insanitary conditions or in conditions whereby the product may become adulterated.

The food industry and consumers can stay informed about recalls using a variety of sources. One government source ([www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov)) will send you email alerts about recalls from different agencies. The FDA and USDA each have recall sites:

- FDA: <http://www.fda.gov/opacom/7alerts.html>
- USDA: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis\\_Recalls/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/index.asp)

If you, a consumer or customer, has a complaint about a food item, the local health district is one place to report the concern. Call us at 327-7499. Hopefully it is an isolated incident, but it could lead to a larger problem. Having the package label and purchase invoice or receipt in hand when contacting the health district can help expedite the report and investigation.